

Please amend Claims 1, 3 and 4 as follows:

1. (amended) A method of identifying a biological sample associated with a plastic container comprising the steps of:

R1 (a) obtaining a plastic container [having an outer surface] comprising an open top end, a closed bottom end, a wall extending from said open top end to said closed bottom end and comprising an inner wall surface and an outer wall surface whereby said outer wall surface comprises a specular reflectance;

(b) providing said plastic container with a unique identifier on said outer wall surface of said plastic container [comprising one or more first areas on said outer surface of said container] comprising [having] a [first] specular reflectance that is greater than said specular reflectance of said outer wall surface [which differs from a second specular reflectance of a second area adjacent said first area; and]

(c) [locating said biological sample in said container.] detecting said specular reflectance of said unique identifier with a light source and sensing light reflected from said specular reflectance; and

(d) associating said specular reflectance of said unique identifier to identify said biological sample.

R2 3. (amended) The method in accordance with Claim [2] 1, wherein said providing step (b) comprises laser etching said outer wall surface of said plastic container to define said unique identifier [one or more first areas].

4. (amended) The method in accordance with Claim [2] 1, wherein said providing step (b) comprises abrading said outer wall surface of said plastic container to define said unique identifier [one or more first areas].

Please add new Claim 32 as follows:

32. (new) The method of Claim 1, wherein said detecting of said specular reflectance is conducted by a detection apparatus comprising a charged-coupled device that detects light reflected from said unique identifier and provides an output signal that indicates amount of light reflected from said unique identifier to match stored information.

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 5-31 are cancelled without prejudice, Claims 1, 3 and 4 amended, new Claim 32 added, Claims 1, 3, 4 and 32 remain in this patent application.

The specification has been amended to correct an informality.

Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly recite the invention and to incorporate the subject matter of cancelled Claims 2, 7, 8, 9 and 16. In addition, support for the amendment of Claim 1 is found in the specification at page 9, lines 15-20, page 10, lines 4-5, page 10, lines 21-22, page 15, lines 1-5.

Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to be consistent with Claim 1 from which they depend.